

Elohim

***Elohim*** (Hebrew: אֱלֹהִים, romanized: *ʾĒlōhīm*: [(ʔ)elo'(h)im]) is a Hebrew word meaning "God" or "gods". Although the word is plural in form, in the Hebrew Bible it usually refers to a single deity,<sup>[1][2][3][4]</sup> particularly (but not always) the God of Israel.<sup>[1][2][3][4][5][6]</sup> At other times it refers to deities in the plural.<sup>[1][2][3][4][5][6]</sup>

Morphologically, the word is the plural form of the word *eloah*<sup>[1][2][4][7][8][9]</sup> and related to *el*. It is cognate to the word *'l-h-m* which is found in Ugaritic, where it is used as the pantheon for Canaanite gods, the children of El, and conventionally vocalized as "Elohim". Most uses of the term *Elohim* in the later Hebrew text imply a view that is at least monolatrist at the time of writing, and such usage (in the singular), as a proper title for the supreme deity, is generally not considered to be synonymous with the term *elohim*, "gods" (plural, simple noun). Rabbinic scholar Maimonides wrote that the various other usages are commonly understood to be homonyms.<sup>[10]</sup>

One theory suggests that the notion of divinity underwent radical changes in the early period of Israelite identity and development of Ancient Hebrew religion. In this view, the ambiguity of the term *elohim* is the result of such changes, cast in terms of "vertical translatability", i.e. the re-interpretation of the gods of the earliest recalled period as the national god of monolatrism as it emerged in the 7th to 6th century BCE in the Kingdom of Judah and during the Babylonian captivity, and further in terms of monotheism by the emergence of Rabbinical Judaism in the 2nd century CE.<sup>[11]</sup>



*Elohim* in Hebrew script. The letters are, right-to-left: *aleph-lamed-he-yud-mem*.

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## Grammar and etymology

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The word *elohim* or *'elohiym* (*ʾĕlôhîym*) is a grammatically plural noun for "gods" or "deities" or various other words in Biblical Hebrew.<sup>[1][2][4][7][8][9][12]</sup>

In Hebrew, the ending *-im* normally indicates a masculine plural. However, when referring to the Jewish God, *Elohim* is usually understood to be grammatically singular (i.e. it governs a singular verb or adjective).<sup>[6][13]</sup> In Modern Hebrew, it is often referred to in the singular despite the *-im* ending that denotes plural masculine nouns in Hebrew.<sup>[14][15]</sup>

It is generally thought that *Elohim* is derived from *eloah*,<sup>[1][2][4][7][8][9]</sup> the latter being an expanded form of the Northwest Semitic noun *'il*.<sup>[16][17]</sup> The related nouns *eloah* (אֱלֹה) and *el* (אֵל) are used as proper names or as generics, in which case they are interchangeable with *elohim*.<sup>[17]</sup> The term contains an added *heh* as third radical to the biconsonantal root. Discussions of the etymology of *elohim* essentially concern this expansion. An exact cognate outside of Hebrew is found in Ugaritic *'lhm*,<sup>[16]</sup> the family of El, the creator god and chief deity of the Canaanite pantheon, in Biblical Aramaic *ʿĒlāhā* and later Syriac *Alaha* ("God"), and in Arabic *ʾilāh* ("god, deity") (or *Allah* as "The [single] God").<sup>[16]</sup> "El" (the basis for the extended root *'lh*) is usually derived from a root meaning "to be strong" and/or "to be in front".<sup>[17]</sup>

## Canaanite religion

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The word *el* (singular) is a standard term for "god" in Aramaic, paleo-Hebrew, and other related Semitic languages including Ugaritic. The Canaanite pantheon of gods was known as *'ilhm*,<sup>[18]</sup> the Ugaritic equivalent to *elohim*.<sup>[5]</sup> For instance, the Ugaritic Baal Cycle mentions "seventy sons of Asherah". Each "son of god" was held to be the originating deity for a particular people (KTU 2 1.4.VI.46).<sup>[19]</sup>

## Usage

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*Elohim* occurs frequently throughout the Torah. In some cases (e.g. Exodus 3:4 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0203.htm#4>), "*Elohim* called unto him out of the midst of the bush ..."), it behaves like a singular noun in Hebrew grammar, and is then generally understood to denote the single God of Israel. In other cases, *Elohim* acts as an ordinary plural of the word *Eloah*, and refers to the polytheistic notion of multiple gods (for example, Exodus 20:3 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0220.htm#3>), "You shall have no other gods before me").

The word *Elohim* occurs more than 2500 times in the Hebrew Bible, with meanings ranging from "gods" in a general sense (as in Exodus 12:12 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0212.htm#12>), where it describes "the gods of Egypt"), to specific gods (the frequent references to Yahweh as the "*elohim*" of Israel), to demons, seraphim, and other supernatural beings, to the spirits of the dead brought up at the behest of King Saul in 1 Samuel 28:13 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt08a28.htm#13>), and even to kings and prophets (e.g., Exodus 4:16 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0204.htm#16>)).<sup>[17]</sup> The phrase *bene elohim*, translated "sons of the Gods", has an exact parallel in Ugaritic and Phoenician texts, referring to the council of the gods.<sup>[17]</sup>

Elohim occupy the seventh rank of ten in the famous medieval rabbinic scholar Maimonides' Jewish angelic hierarchy. Maimonides said: "I must premise that every Hebrew [now] knows that the term Elohim is a homonym, and denotes God, angels, judges, and the rulers of countries, ..." <sup>[10]</sup>

## With plural verb

In 1 Samuel 28:13 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt08a28.htm#13>), *elohim* is used with a plural verb. The witch of Endor told Saul that she saw *elohim* ascending (*olim* אֵלִים, plural verb) out of the earth. <sup>[20]</sup>

In Genesis 20:13 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0120.htm#13>), Abraham, before the polytheistic Philistine king Abimelech, says that "Elohim (translated as God) caused (וַיַּתְּחֵן, plural verb) me to wander". <sup>[21][22][23]</sup> Whereas the Greek Septuagint (LXX) has a singular verb form (ἐξήγαγε(ν), aorist II), most English versions usually translate this as "God caused" (which does not distinguish between a singular and plural verb). <sup>[24]</sup>

## With singular verb

*Elohim*, when meaning the God of Israel, is mostly grammatically singular, and is commonly translated as "God", and capitalised. For example, in Genesis 1:26 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0101.htm#26>), it is written: "Then Elohim (translated as God) said (singular verb), 'Let us (plural) make (plural verb) man in our (plural) image, after our (plural) likeness'". Wilhelm Gesenius and other Hebrew grammarians traditionally described this as the *pluralis excellentiae* (plural of excellence), which is similar to the *pluralis majestatis* (plural of majesty, or "Royal we"). <sup>[25][a]</sup> Gesenius comments that the singular Hebrew term *Elohim* is to be distinguished from *elohim* used to refer to plural gods, and remarks that:

The supposition that אֱלֹהִים (*elohim*) is to be regarded as merely a remnant of earlier polytheistic views (i.e. as originally only a numerical plural) is at least highly improbable, and, moreover, would not explain the analogous plurals (see below). That the language has entirely rejected the idea of numerical plurality in אֱלֹהִים (whenever it denotes *one* God), is proved especially by its being almost invariably joined with a singular attribute (cf. §132h), e.g. אֱלֹהִים יְצָרָהּ Psalms 7:10 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt2607.htm#10>), &c. Hence אֱלֹהִים may have been used originally not only as a numerical but also as an abstract plural (corresponding to the Latin *numen*, and our *Godhead*), and, like other abstracts of the same kind, have been transferred to a concrete single god (even of the heathen).

To the same class (and probably formed on the analogy of אֱלֹהִים) belong the plurals קְדוֹשִׁים (*kadoshim*), meaning *the Most Holy* (only of Yahweh, Hosea 12:1 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt1312.htm#1>), Proverbs 9:10 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt2809.htm#10>), 30:3 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt2830.htm#3>) – cf. אֱלֹהִים קְדוֹשִׁים *elohiyim kadoshim* in Joshua 24:19 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0624.htm#19>) and the singular Aramaic ܡܠܝܚܝܢ *the Most High*, Daniel 7:18 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt3407.htm#18>), 7:22 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt3407.htm#22>), 7:25 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt3407.htm#25>)); and probably תְּרָפִים (*teraphim*) (usually taken in the sense of *penates*), the image of a god, used especially for obtaining oracles. Certainly in 1 Samuel 19:13 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt08a19.htm#13>), 19:16 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt08a19.htm#16>) only *one* image is intended; in most other places a single image *may* be intended; in Zechariah 10:2 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt2310.htm#2>) alone is it most naturally taken as a numerical plural.

— Gesenius, Wilhelm (1910). "124. The Various Uses of the Plural-form" ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gesenius%27\\_Hebrew\\_Grammar/124.\\_The\\_Various\\_Uses\\_of\\_the\\_Plural](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gesenius%27_Hebrew_Grammar/124._The_Various_Uses_of_the_Plural)

-form). In Kautzsch, Emil (ed.). Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar. Translated by Cowley, Arthur Ernest (2nd, Revised and enlarged ed.). Oxford University Press. p. 399 – via Wikisource.

There are a number of notable exceptions to the rule that *Elohim* is treated as singular when referring to the God of Israel, including Genesis 20:13 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0120.htm#13>), Genesis 35:7 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0135.htm#7>), 2 Samuel 7:23 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt08b07.htm#23>) and Psalms 58:11 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt2658.htm#11>), and notably the epithet of the "Living God" (Deuteronomy 5:26 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0505.htm#26>) etc.), which is constructed with the plural adjective, *Elohim ḥayyim* (אלהים חיים) but still takes singular verbs. The treatment of *Elohim* as both singular and plural is, according to Mark Sameth, consistent with a theory put forth by Guillaume Postel (16th century) and Michelangelo Lanci (19th century) that the God of Israel was understood by the ancient priests to be a singular, dual-gendered deity.<sup>[27][28][29][30]</sup>

In the Septuagint and New Testament translations, *Elohim* has the singular ὁ θεός even in these cases, and modern translations follow suit in giving "God" in the singular. The Samaritan Torah has edited out some of these exceptions.<sup>[31]</sup>

## Angels and judges

In a few cases in the Greek Septuagint (LXX), Hebrew *elohim* with a plural verb, or with implied plural context, was rendered either *angeloi* ("angels") or *to kriterion tou Theou* ("the judgement of God").<sup>[32]</sup> These passages then entered first the Latin Vulgate, then the English King James Version (KJV) as "angels" and "judges", respectively. From this came the result that James Strong, for example, listed "angels" and "judges" as possible meanings for *elohim* with a plural verb in his Strong's Concordance,<sup>[1][2]</sup> and the same is true of many other 17th-20th century reference works. Both Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon and the Brown–Driver–Briggs Lexicon<sup>[2]</sup> list both "angels" and "judges" as possible alternative meanings of *elohim* with plural verbs and adjectives.

Gesenius and Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg have questioned the reliability of the Septuagint translation in this matter. Gesenius lists the meaning without agreeing with it.<sup>[33]</sup> Hengstenberg stated that the Hebrew Bible text never uses *elohim* to refer to "angels", but that the Septuagint translators refused the references to "gods" in the verses they amended to "angels".<sup>[34]</sup>

The Greek New Testament (NT) quotes Psalms 8:4–6 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt2608.htm#4>) in Hebrews 2:6b-8a, where the Greek NT has "ἁγγέλους" (*angelous*) in vs. 7,<sup>[35]</sup> quoting Psalms 8:5 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt2608.htm#5>) (8:6 in the LXX), which also has "ἁγγέλους" in a version of the Greek Septuagint.<sup>[36]</sup> In the KJV, *elohim* (Strong's number H430) is translated as "angels" only in Psalm 8:5.<sup>[37]</sup>

The KJV translates *elohim* as "judges" in Exodus 21:6 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0221.htm#6>); Exodus 22:8 (<https://biblehub.com/text/exodus/22-8.htm>); twice in Exodus 22:9 (<https://biblehub.com/text/exodus/22-9.htm>)<sup>[38]</sup> and as "judge" in 1 Samuel 2:25 ([https://biblehub.com/1\\_samuel/2-25.htm](https://biblehub.com/1_samuel/2-25.htm)).

Angels and Fallen angels cited in the Hebrew Bible and external literature contain the related noun *el* (ֵל) such as Michael, Gabriel and Samael.<sup>[39]</sup>

## Other plural-singuals in biblical Hebrew

The Hebrew language has several nouns with *-im* (masculine plural) and *-oth* (feminine plural) endings which nevertheless take singular verbs, adjectives and pronouns. For example, *Baalim*,<sup>[40]</sup> *Adonim*,<sup>[41]</sup> *Behemoth*.<sup>[42]</sup> This form is known as the "honorific plural", in which the pluralization is a sign of power or honor.<sup>[43]</sup> A very common singular Hebrew word with plural ending is the word *achoth*, meaning sister, with the irregular plural form *achioth*.<sup>[44]</sup>

Alternatively, there are several other frequently used words in the Hebrew language that contain a masculine plural ending but also maintain this form in singular concept. The major examples are: *Sky/Heavens* (*שָׁמַיִם* - *shamayim*), *Face* (*פָּנִים* - *panim*), *Life* (*חַיִּים* - *chayyim*), *Water* (*מַיִם* - *mayim*). Of these four nouns, three appear in the first sentence of Genesis<sup>[45]</sup> (along with *elohim*). Three of them also appear in the first sentence of the Eden creation story<sup>[46]</sup> (also along with *elohim*). Instead of "honorific plural" these other plural nouns terms represent something which is constantly changing. Water, sky, face, life are "things which are never bound to one form."<sup>[47]</sup>

## Jacob's ladder "gods were revealed" (plural)

In the following verses *Elohim* was translated as God singular in the King James Version even though it was accompanied by plural verbs and other plural grammatical terms.

And there he built an altar and called the place El-bethel, because there God had revealed [plural verb] himself to him when he fled from his brother.

— Genesis 35:7, ESV

Here the Hebrew verb "revealed" is plural, hence: "the gods were revealed". A NET Bible note claims that the KJV wrongly translates: "God appeared unto him".<sup>[48]</sup> This is one of several instances where the Bible uses plural verbs with the name *elohim*.<sup>[49][50]</sup>

## The Divine Council

God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods. ...

I have said, Ye [are] gods; and all of you [are] children of the most High.

But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

— Psalm 82:1, 6–7 (AV)

Marti Steussy, in *Chalice Introduction to the Old Testament*, discusses: "The first verse of Psalm 82: 'Elohim has taken his place in the divine council.' Here *elohim* has a singular verb and clearly refers to God. But in verse 6 of the Psalm, God says to the other members of the council, 'You [plural] are *elohim*.' Here *elohim* has to mean gods."<sup>[51]</sup>

Mark Smith, referring to this same Psalm, states in *God in Translation*: "This psalm presents a scene of the gods meeting together in divine council ... *Elohim* stands in the council of El. Among the *elohim* he pronounces judgment: ..." <sup>[52]</sup>

In *Hulsean Lectures for...*, H. M. Stephenson discussed Jesus' argument in John 10:34–36 concerning Psalm 82. (In answer to the charge of blasphemy Jesus replied:) "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods. If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" – "Now what is the force of this quotation 'I said ye are gods.' It is from the Asaph Psalm which begins 'Elohim hath taken His place in the mighty assembly. In the midst of the Elohim He is judging.'" <sup>[53]</sup>

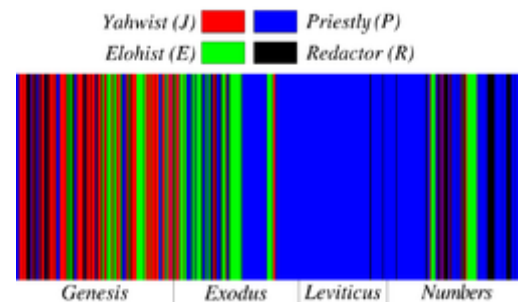
## Sons of God

The Hebrew word for "son" is *ben*; plural is *bānim* (with the construct state form being "benei"). The Hebrew term *benei elohim* ("sons of God" or "sons of the gods") in Genesis 6:2 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0106.htm#2>) <sup>[54]</sup> compares to the use of "sons of gods" (Ugaritic: *b'n il*) sons of El in Ugaritic mythology. <sup>[55]</sup> Karel van der Toorn states that gods can be referred to collectively as *bene elim*, *bene elyon*, or *bene elohim*. <sup>[17]</sup>

## Elohist

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The Hebrew Bible uses various names for the God of Israel. <sup>[58]:102</sup> According to the documentary hypothesis, these variations are the products of different source texts and narratives that constitute the composition of the Torah: *Elohim* is the name of God used in the Elohist (E) and Priestly (P) sources, while *Yahweh* is the name of God used in the Jahwist (J) source. <sup>[56][57][58][59][60]</sup> Form criticism postulates the differences of names may be the result of geographical origins; the P and E sources coming from the North and J from the South. <sup>[58]:102[59]</sup> There may be a theological point, that God did not reveal his name, *Yahweh*, before the time of Moses, though Hans Heinrich Schmid showed that the Jahwist was aware of the prophetic books from the 7th and 8th centuries BCE. <sup>[61]</sup>



Friedman's distribution of materials by source of the first four books of the Hebrew Bible, including a redactor (black), according to the documentary hypothesis. <sup>[56][57]</sup>

The Jahwist source presents *Yahweh* anthropomorphically: for example, walking through the Garden of Eden looking for Adam and Eve. The Elohist source often presents *Elohim* as more distant and frequently involves angels, as in the Elohist version of the tale of Jacob's Ladder, in which there is a ladder to the clouds, with angels climbing up and down, with *Elohim* at the top. In the Jahwist version of the tale, *Yahweh* is simply stationed in the sky, above the clouds without the ladder or angels. Likewise, the Elohist source describes Jacob wrestling with an angel.

The classical documentary hypothesis, first developed in the late 19th century among biblical scholars and textual critics, holds that the Jahwist portions of the Torah were composed in the 10th-9th century BCE <sup>[58]:102</sup> and the Elohist portions in the 9th-8th century BCE, <sup>[58]:102[59]</sup> i.e. during the early period of the Kingdom of Judah. This, however, is not universally accepted as later literary scholarship seems to show evidence of a later "Elohist redaction" (post-exilic) during the 5th century BCE which sometimes makes it difficult to determine whether a given passage is "Elohist" in origin, or the result of a later editor.

## Latter Day Saint movement

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In the Latter Day Saint movement and Mormonism, *Elohim* refers to God the Father.<sup>[62][63]</sup> Elohim is the father of Jesus in both the physical and the spiritual realms, whose name before birth is said to be Jehovah.<sup>[62][63][64]</sup>

In the belief system held by the Christian churches that adhere to the Latter Day Saint movement and most Mormon denominations, including The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church), the term *God* refers to Elohim (the Eternal Father),<sup>[62][63]</sup> whereas *Godhead* means a council of three distinct gods: Elohim (God the Father), Jehovah (the Son of God, Jesus Christ),<sup>[62][63]</sup> and the Holy Ghost, in a non-trinitarian conception of the Godhead.<sup>[62][63]</sup> In Mormonism, the three persons are considered to be physically separate beings, or personages, but united in will and purpose; this conception differs significantly from mainline Christian trinitarianism.<sup>[62][63][65]</sup> As such, the term *Godhead* differs from how it is used in mainstream Christianity.<sup>[62][63]</sup> This description of God represents the orthodoxy of the LDS Church, established early in the 19th century.<sup>[62]</sup>

The Book of Abraham, a sacred text accepted by some branches of the Latter Day Saint movement, contains a paraphrase of the first chapter of Genesis which explicitly translates *Elohim* as "the Gods" multiple times; this is suggested by apostle James E. Talmage to indicate a "plurality of excellence or intensity, rather than distinctively of number".<sup>[66]</sup>

## Raëlism

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The new religious movement and UFO religion International Raëlian Movement, founded by the French journalist Claude Vorilhon (who later became known as "Raël") in 1974,<sup>[67]</sup> claims that the Hebrew word *Elohim* from the Book of Genesis actually refers to a species of extraterrestrial aliens.<sup>[68]</sup>

## Gnosticism

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In the Gnostic text known as the Secret Book of John, Elohim is another name for Abel, whose parents are Eve and Yaldabaoth. He rules over the elements of water and earth, alongside Cain, who is seen as Yahweh ruling over the elements of fire and wind.<sup>[69]</sup> However, the 2nd century Gnostic teacher Justin proposed a cosmological model with three original divinities. The first is a transcendental being called the Good, the second is Elohim, appearing here as an intermediate male figure, and the third is an Earth-mother called Eden. The world along with the first humans are created from the love between Elohim and Eden, but when Elohim learns about the existence of the Good above him and ascends trying to reach it, he causes evil to enter the universe.<sup>[70]</sup>

## See also

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- Allahumma
- Anunnaki
- Henotheism § Canaanite religion and early Judaism
- Elyon
- Genesis creation narrative
- Monolatry § In ancient Israel
- Names of God
- Theophory in the Bible

## References

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## Explanatory footnotes

- a. According to Rabbi Joseph Hertz, the word's use in Genesis 1:1 (<https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0101.htm#1>) "indicates that God comprehends and unifies all the forces of eternity and infinity."<sup>[26]</sup>

## Citations

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2. "Strong's Hebrew: 430. אלהים (elohim) -- God (Strong's Concordance; Englishman's Concordance; NAS Exhaustive Concordance; Brown-Driver-Briggs definition; Strong's Exhaustive Concordance definition; Forms and Transliterations)" (<https://biblehub.com/str/hebrew/430.htm>). *Biblehub.com*. 2020. Retrieved 1 August 2020.
3. Coogan, Michael D.; Brettler, Marc Z.; Newsom, Carol A.; Perkins, Pheme, eds. (2007). "Glossary: "Elohim" " ([https://books.google.com/books?id=Nc-i\\_pQsiW8C&pg=PA544](https://books.google.com/books?id=Nc-i_pQsiW8C&pg=PA544)). *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha* (3rd, Augmented ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. p. Glossary: 544. ISBN 978-0-19-528880-3. "**Elohim**. The Hebrew word usually translated "God," though its plural form is sometimes also translated "gods." It is originally a common noun (a god), though it is often used as a proper noun for the God of Israel, even though it is a plural form."
4. "Elohim - Hebrew god" (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Elohim>). *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Edinburgh: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. 20 July 1998. Retrieved 1 August 2020. "**Elohim**, singular **Eloah**, (Hebrew: God), the God of Israel in the Old Testament. A plural of majesty, the term Elohim—though sometimes used for other deities, such as the Moabite god Chemosh, the Sidonian goddess Astarte, and also for other majestic beings such as angels, kings, judges (the Old Testament shofetim), and the Messiah—is usually employed in the Old Testament for the one and only God of Israel, whose personal name was revealed to Moses as YHWH, or Yahweh (q.v.). When referring to Yahweh, *elohim* very often is accompanied by the article *ha-*, to mean, in combination, "the God," and sometimes with a further identification *Elohim hayyim*, meaning "the living God." Though Elohim is plural in form, it is understood in the singular sense. Thus, in Genesis the words, "In the beginning God (Elohim) created the heavens and the earth," Elohim is monotheistic in connotation, though its grammatical structure seems polytheistic. The Israelites probably borrowed the Canaanite plural noun Elohim and made it singular in meaning in their cultic practices and theological reflections."
5. Van der Toorn 1999, pp. 352–353, 360–364.
6. McLaughlin 2000, pp. 401–402.
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